VALLEY FREE PRESS

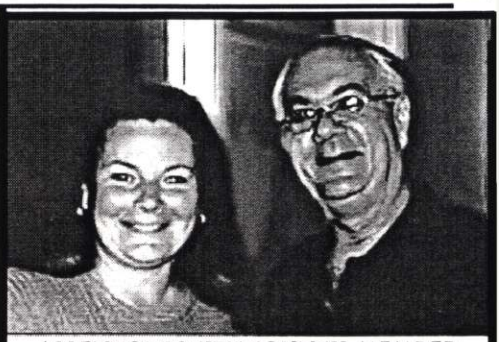
THE LEHIGH VALLEY'S GAY & LESBIAN OPINION & NEWSPAPER

VOL. 5 NO. 9 MID-DECEMBER & JANUARY 2002

STATE HATE CRIMES BILL BECOMES LAW!!!

The Pennsylvania House of Representatives has passed the legislation to amend the state's Ethnic Intimidation Act by adding actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, gender, mental and physical disability, and ancestry to the current Ethnic Intimidation Act, which already includes Race, Religion, National Origin and Color. The State Senate had passed the legislation in 2001. The Governor signed the Bill into law on Dec. 3, 2002.

This caps a ten year lobbying effort by members of the Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Alliance (PA-GALA) and other PA GLBT organizations. It is the first state law in Pennsylvania that recognizes the existence of sexual orientation and gender identity as minority categories. It is the most inclusive Hate Crimes Law in the United States. Read more on page 5.



ALLENTOWN CITY COUNCIL MEMBER GAIL HOOVER MET WITH CONGRESSMAN BARNEY FRANK & OTHER INTERNATIONAL GLBT ELECTED LEADERS AT THE 18TH ANUAL CONVENTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF LESBIAN & GAY OFFICIALS, IN PUERTO RICO.

STEVE BLACK IS AN "OUT 100"

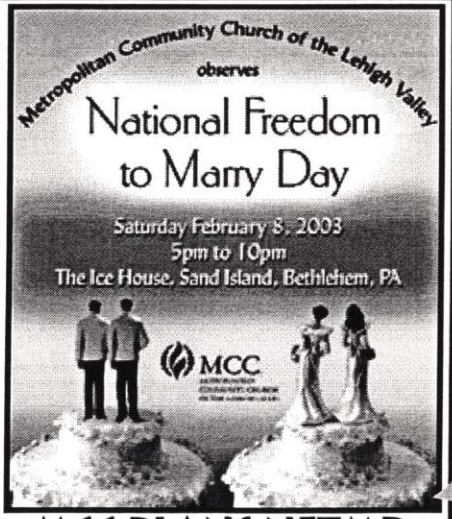
Steve Black was named one of Out Magazine's 100 Most Intriguing Gay People of the Year, along with Rosie O'Donnell & Ian McKellen. Steve's founding of PA-GALA (with Liz Bradbury, who was also mentioned) was featured. There's still time to get his autograph.

PPL GETS POLICY

Pennsylvania Power & Light has added sexual orientation to their anti-discrimination policy. PPL has also recognized and chartered a GLBT employee group called GLOW. The Pres. of GLOW is Donna Cruciani, who worked on its formation for several years. PPL employees can contact GLOW at GLOW,BusRes GRP. Others can email: <dmcruciani@pplweb.net>.

FRED PHELPS'S FAMILY DID COME TO TOWN

READ ABOUT IT ON PAGE 7



MCC PLANS NFTMD CEREMONY IN FEB.

WITH DANCE AND CELEBRATION- SEE PAGE 5

MCC

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY INVITES YOU TO THEIR

OPEN HOUSE ON CHRISTMAS EVE IN THEIR NEW WORSHIP SPACE

MCCLV is pleased to invite the community to its first worship service at 1901 S. 12th Street in the Merchant's Square Mall in Allentown on Christmas Eve, at 10 p.m. There will be a special open house at **8 p.m.** All are welcome! Christmas Day service will start at 10:30 a.m. Beginning January 6, MCCLV will offer a 10:30 a.m. and a 6 p.m. worship service every Sunday!

This new full-time space will allow MCCLV to better serve the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and allied community. MCCLV will be easily accessible to all major highways and the building is handicapped accessible. The City of Allentown has made it clear that MCCLV is welcome. MCCLV Pastor, Rev. Elizabeth Goudy and the congregation look forward to welcoming everyone to the new space.

To get to MCCLV, take Lehigh Street in Allentown. Turn onto Vultee St. across from Queen City Airport (Queen City Diner is on the corner). Cross RR tracks. Merchant's Square parking lot is directly in front of you. New MCC phone: 610-709-8800

PLANET Parenthood

by Carolyn Lewis

Carolyn Lewis is on vacation, she'll be back next month.

Notes from an Honorary Nana

Earlier this fall, one of the five-year-old twin boys that call us Nana, phoned us to ask, "Nana, when are you and Nana Trish coming for a playdate?" I, of course, replied, as a dutiful Nana should, "Well, when do you want us to come?" he said he wanted us to come next Sunday and of course we said we would be there. They live quite far away and a visit is an all day affair. So I asked, "What would you like to do when we come to visit, Jason." To which he replied, "Oh just the 'regular edition' playdate." He was obviously not interested in the 'abridged edition' playdate.

Part of the function of our going to visit these cute little boys is allowing their two Mom's, who both have full time jobs, a time out from Mommying. We take the boys out for the day.

A 'regular edition' playdate includes a treasure hunt with multiple character roles, a 'Mother-May-I?' tournament, lunch, a movie, playground time, and then reading a book to them when we bring them home. What they really like is being the focus of adult attention all day long. What their mom's appreciate is a breather.

Meanwhile, there is a four year-old little girl, who also calls us Nana. Over the last few weeks we have been working on making special holiday presents for her family. They have involved everything from collage and coloring to cooking. Recently she said to me, "I like to come here because there are so many activities."

I'm glad we can give these kids our time. In fact, that's what this time of year is really about. I'd like to encourage everyone to give time to their friends, neighbors and community. Stop and think, how much time a week do you spend with friends?

Get together and laugh and sing and play. We all have to spend so much time working and dealing with hard stuff, we need to put time aside this season, (and the rest of the year) to have fun.

It's not easy, but try hard to do something that makes you and your friends laugh this month. Play pictionary or charades, do the Cha Cha or the Tango, make a snow angel, tell a joke. If you have forgotten how to have fun, just spend a little time with some little kids, they are usually really good at it.

MCC TO PARTICIPATE IN AIDS OUTREACH CHRISTMAS ANGEL PROJECT

MCC needs "elves" to assist in the Christmas Angels Project delivery of gifts to families. Volunteers will gather at the AIDS Outreach office in Allentown, December 21 at 9:00 am. Teams will receive detailed directions to the homes for the deliveries. AIDS Out reach is located at: 112 North 5th St. in Allentown. For directions or more information: 610-954-7775.

MCC TO PURCHASE PIANO

At the regularly scheduled Board meeting on December 9th, the MCC Board unanimously voted to purchase the 7 1/2 foot Otto Altonburg grand piano for the congregation. The Piano Team, consisting of Steve Ziminsky and Thom Ritter, presented a final report - after conducting a three month fundraising drive for the instrument. Additional fund-raisers will be held in 2003. You can see/hear the new piano during any MCC Service of Worship (Sundays at 10:30AM and 6PM), and also at the Open House on Christmas Eve from 8-10PM - immediately before the service that evening. Stevie Z will be playing the 10PM Christmas Eve service at the new facility and invites you to see and hear this glorious new tool for music ministry.

RAGS TO RICHES TAKE THE FIRST STEP

by Denise McKelvey

AN ECONOMY TO BE THANKFUL FOR

While it is true that we have retreated from the dizzying heights of the late 90's, it is puzzling to encounter so much unbridled pessimism in the face of such extraordinary success. Contrary to what you read, there is plenty in business, our community and the economy to be thankful for. Let's look at the economic factors which seem to cause alarm.

Unemployment, for example, has risen in recent years but remains low by historical standards, despite the amazing absorption of millions of women and immigrants (and openly gay individuals) into the work force. These new workers have more opportunities than ever--avoiding injury or death on the job, much more acceptance, tolerance and even domestic partner benefit availability.

The inflation we do have in housing prices is supposed to worry us. Although we may be in a housing bubble (time will tell) high-priced housing is also a sign of affluence and growth.

On top of this, the economy is expanding at a rate of 4% in the third quarter, up from 1.3% in the second quarter. This trend is very good for all of us. Gay-owned businesses included.

There will always be economic issues to fret about. We appear to have a strong, stable economy--one that seems to be on the upswing. Since the awful slide on Wall Street, stock prices appear to have stabilized. Talk of war also has companies and investors spooked. Yet past wars have actually stimulated the economy.

To raise consumer confidence, maybe the Federal Reserve should pay for free massages and other mood enhancers for the nation's journalists. It could help with the constant nay saying... well, it couldn't hurt anyway. Until then, you can expect to hear more pessimism, even though the current economy is one that economists might have considered fabulous just a generation ago.

This doesn't mean you should forget the basics. Don't overspend over the holiday season. Only use your credit cards if you can pay them off when the bill arrives. Continue to maintain or build an adequate cash reserve. Continue to work towards achieving your financial goals.

And enjoy the holidays! Denise

Denise McKelvey is a Financial Advisor for American Express Financial Inc located at 5000 Tilghman St. Suite 157, Allentown PA 18104. Please forward questions or comments to <denise.m.mckelvey@aexp.com>. Information contained in this column may not be suitable for your specific financial situation.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHIRST SUPPORTS MCCLV

Dozens of United Church of Christ clergy have signed and delivered a statement of support to the Metropolitan Community Church congregation.

The statement included the following: "...we, the undersigned, do hereby: ...express our sorrow that Christian brothers and sisters who happen to be gay, lesbian or bisexual were made the object of religious hatred in the City of Bethlehem during the September 11, 2002 ecumenical worship...We call on all churches ... of the United church of Christ ... to insist on justice and protection for those gay, lesbian and bisexual brothers and sisters who endure hatred under the banner of religion.

The UCC representatives also commended Rev. Elizabeth Goudy for her "exemplary spiritual leadership in the wake of the recent events."

The full statement appeared as an editorial in the Morning Call. Copies of the statement are available at MCC.

HOT NEWS

GLORA SCHEDULE

The Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown will celebrate New Year's Eve with a potluck supper in Blandon. It's a music and game night and an optional slumber party.

Also on the schedule is the Anti-Super Bowl / Super Bowl party at Steve and Robert's on Jan. 26 in Allentown. And on Feb. 1, there will be a game night in Breinigsville. For more information about GLORA and these events, email GLORAinPA@aol.com or write to GLORA PO Box 1952, Allentown PA. 18105-1952.

OVOM FILM

The Theatre Outlet will present an encore screening of the locally filmed documentary, HIV/AIDS: 20 Years Later on Sat., Jan. 11 @ 8pm. Admission: $8. Proceeds will help produce My Trans Mission, scheduled to premeire at the National Association of Social Workers Conference in March 2003. 20 Years Later was the cover story for Social Work Today Magazine for October. For reservations call T.O. @ 610.820.9270. Contact OVOM: A1vision 1mission@aol.com to volunteer.

GLOSS EVENTS

The Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society's December Game Night & Holiday Gathering will be held at the on Saturday, December 21. As usual, games start at 7pm, with pizza being ordered at 8. Please be prepared to contribute $6 if you eat pizza and $3 if you don't. (Exact change is appreciated.) The January GLOSS game night will be the Sat. the 18th. For more information: 610-434-2966.

INTEGRITY

Integrity is an organization of GLBT Episcopalians and their families and allies. Integrity gathers quarterly in member's homes for simple Eucharist, potluck and social time. The next gathering for Integrity Bethlehem will be on January 17 (Friday) at 6pm in Limeport. Please call Scott 610-691-8303 or Dixie 610-758-8642 for directions and further information.

ACC♀ CONCERT

ACCO, A CHORUS CELEBRATING WOMEN presents the Annual Winter Solstice Concert. Music from various world cultures unites this celebration of the season of Light. At: Christ Lutheran Church, 13th & Hamilton Sts, Allentown. Dec. 21 8 p.m. Tickets: $12 adults; $9 seniors, groups; $6 students. For information: 610-434-5074.

B&N GLBT BOOK CLUB

The Barnes & Noble GLBT Book Club meets every month at the Whitehall store. Upcoming dates and selections: DEC 2002: There will be no group discussion this month. JAN 2003: meets Tuesday, January 21, 2003 at 7:30PM. January's title is "The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay" by Michael Chabon (winner of the Pulitzer Prize!). FEB 2003: Tuesday, February 18, 2003 at 7:30PM. February's title is: "The Well of Loneliness" by Radclyffe Hall, a classic of Lesbian Fiction. MAR 2003: Tuesday, March 18, 2003 at 7:00PM. March's title is: "Martin Bauman or a Sure Thing" by David Leavitt. B&N Store Phone: 610-821-7732.

PRIDE LV

Pride LV will be wrapping gifts for shoppers at Barnes & Noble on MacArthur Rd. in Whitehall. Every year local nonprofit groups are invited to raise donations and promote their organization at B&N. Pride will be providing this service on Friday, 12/6 from 1-4pm; Wednesday, 12/11 from 1-4pm; & Saturday, 12/14 from 7-11pm. If you are interested in volunteering for this or other activities, please contact Pride by email: Info@PrideLV.org or by phone at 610-770-6200. Website: www.pridelv.org.

NEW DRAG KING TROUPE

"The Royal Knights" will debut at Diamonz on Friday, Dec. 13. The Knights are made up of Renegade (LV Pride King 2001), Jayden (Dz. King 2001), MacDaddy, Christian & Amir. They plan to perform every other month at Diamonz in Bethlehem & Sisters in Philadelphia. Their first appearance at Sisters will be on Dec. 18. Philly also has a new group called "The Brothers," that plans to perform regularly at Sisters & Diamonz. The Knights hope to hold future benefit shows, but have not made any definite plans at this time.

NORTH PENN H.S. GSA

Students at North Penn High School have formed a Gay Bisexual Lesbian Straight Alliance (GLBSA). Over 200 students signed up for the group during the school's September activities fair. Several teachers volunteered to be club advisors.

Tolerance among students and the creation of a safe community and educating people about sexual minorities and gender identity issues are among the club's purposes. Congratularions students!

THEATER OUTLET

Theatre Outlet's comedy, FUDDY MEERS, is running on the Outlet's Mainstage from December 5 thru December 22, 2003. Guest Director for FUDDY MEERS is New York City director Marshall Mays, the Artistic Director of NYC's Kaleidoscope Theatre Company. Shows are on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm and Sundays at 2pm. Tickets are $15 adults, $10 students & seniors. All Thursday tickets are just $10. Ticket reservations: 610-820-9270.

"The Holiday Arts Marketplace" with fine art gifts for sale in the ArtLobby Gallery runs December 5 - December 22 as well. The Theatre Outlet is located at 29 North 9th Street in downtown Allentown.

HOSPITAL HIV GRANT

St. Luke's hospital has recently received a Title III Planning Grant from the federal government and is conducting a needs assessment throughout the community with regard to unmet needs in the Lehigh Valley HIV-positive community. Including what services people are looking for and how services can be improved.

If you are able to provide input for this assessment or are interested in improving HIV services in the Lehigh Valley, please contact HIV Grant Coordinator Holly Gibbons at St. Luke's Hospital.

MCC BIBLE STUDY

Starting Sunday, January 5 a weekly Bible Study will be offered at 9 a.m. in Metropolitan Community Church of the Lehigh Valley's new space in Allentown. The Study will start with the Book of Joshua, with the firstsession focusing on Joshua 1:1-18. Contact MCCLV: 610-709-8800 for more information.

STEVIE Z APPEARANCES

Hear Stevie Z the piano man at the Stonewall - December 20 @ 9PM. It's the 2nd Annual Christmas Sing-A-Long. On January 24, (9PM-Midnite) Stevie returns to the Stonewall Mooselounge for Customer Appreciation Night. No cover before midnight on both shows.

Stevie will also be at the Brick Tavern in Quakertown on Sat., December 28. and on all Saturdays in January (the 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th), from 6:30-9:30PM. on all nights.

Stevie announces the continuation of his Tips Donation Program for 2003. 50% of all tips are given to area charitable groups. The group selected for Jan/Feb will be Pride of the Lehigh Valley.

CALENDAR

ACCO-A Chorus Celebrating Women,
AIDS Outreach-112 N. 5th St. Allentown, PA 610.435.8424
AIDSWALK- AIDSWALK Lehigh Valley - 610.974.8701 www.regiononline.com/lvaids
ASC- AIDS Service Center 610.974.8701
BMA- Bucks/Montgomery Alliance for Gay and Lesbian Concerns 215-529-0360
B&N- Barnes and Noble Gay&Lesbian Book Club, White Hall store, Monthly, 7:00pm
BEARS.-1st Saturdays Monthly, 8pm, at the Stonewall, Moose Lounge 610-814-6916, Mtnbear@fast.net.
CIVIC and 19th St. Theater, 527 N 19th St, 610-432-8943, <.civictheater,com>
Enigma Players -- qacres@prolog.net
equal@agere - email: equal@agere.com
FACT- Fighting AIDS Continuously Together 610.820.5519
GLEE at Air Products
GLASS-at Lehigh Univ., 610.758.3469
GLISN- at Dun & Bradstreet, <vagranthollow.com/GLISN/>
GLORA- Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown (Social gatherings, various dates) Newsletter- The Tassle. Write to: P.O. Box 1952, Allentown PA18105-1952, email-GLORAinPA@AOL.COM
GLOSS - Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society, P.O.Box 21862 Lehigh Valley, PA 18002 610.434.2966.
GLSEN-Gay, Lesbian, Straight, Education Network, 610-867-6641, csbarron21@aol.com Meetings, at 7:00 pm in rooms 108-109 of the Seeger Student Union, Muhlenberg College
GMLV- Gay Men of the Lehigh Valley, 2nd Saturdays Monthly 7pm, 610.954.7775
HAVEN GLBT Youth Group of the UUC LV - call:610-868-215, email: havenyouthgroup@hotmail.com or zinnes@fast.net
HMFF-Hope Ministry Family Fellowship, Sundays, 11 am, Open Space Gallery, 931 Hamilton St. 610-791-0716
Integrity- Lesbian and Gay Episcopalians Family & Friends meet squarterly for fellowship and fun. 610-758-8642 or integritybeth@mindspring.com"
KS-Kindred Spirits- Support, discussion, and social group for lesbians and bisexual women Contact : Chris at 610-868-0248, or Donna at 610.997.00607
LVGMC -Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus, email:lvgmc@hotmail.com, <www.lvgmc.org> phone 610-366-3320, rehearsals: Wesley United Methodist Church, 2540 Center Street, Bethlehem
MCC - Metropolitan Community office-424 Center St. Bethlehem, 6 pm Sundays , 610.954.7775
NCC- Northampton Community College Gay Lesbian and Bisexual Student Union, call 610.861.5541(#1386) or 882-2531
19th St/Civic Theatre - 610.432.8943
Out There- Students at Cedar Crest College
OVOM- LV Documentary Film Org.
PA-GALA - PA Gay and Lesbian Alliance for Political Action, (Candidate Info Booklet, & Political Lobbying) For membership: send $20 to: P.O.Box 20825 Lehigh Valley 18002 610.432.5449 pa-gala.org
PFLAG - LV Parents Families& Friends of Lesbians and gays, 1st Tues. 1st Pres. Church Allentown 610.967.5219 <www.users.fast.net/~pflag>
Pride - Pride of the Lehigh Valley, (Pride Festival) 610.770.6200, email: <lvpride@hotmail.com>, <www.pridelv.org>
QuEST - Student group at Lafayette College Farion Center Box 429 Easton, PA, <QuEST_Lafayette@hotmail.com>

DECEMBER 2002 WHAT A YEAR!!!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 FACT Snowball	2 RAA	3 LVGMC GLOSS PFLAG A Ovom	4 HAVEN	5 ACCO RAA GLOSS TO →	6	7 WDIY GLOSS BEARS PFLAG M
8 UUCLV GLORA Dinner GLOSS TO →	9 RAA GLSEN	10 GLOSS LVGMC MCC	11 HAVEN	12 ACCO RAA GLOSS	13 KS	14 GLOSS GMLV
15 MCC GLOSS UUCLV Bingo HMFF TO →	16 RAA MCC	17 PFLAG R GLOSS LVGMC	18 HAVEN	19 ACCO PFLAG P RAA GLOSS PA Play →	20 KS Stevie Z	21 GLOSS WDIY Christmas Angels ACCO
22 Bingo HMFF UUCLV MCC GLOSS	23 RAA	24 MCC Open House & Service	25 HAVEN MCC Christmas	26 RAA ACCO GLOSS	27 KS	28 Stevie Z GLOSS WDIY
29 Bingo HMFF UUCLV MCC GLOSS	30 RAA	31 GLORA POTLUCK NEW YEARS				

JANUARY 2003

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		NEW	1 HAVEN YEARS	2 GLOSS RAA	3	4 PFLAG M GLOSS BEARS Stevie Z
5 WDIY HMFF Bingo MCC UUCLV	6 RAA	7 GLOSS PFLAG A MCC LVGMC	8 HAVEN	9 RAA GLOSS	10 KS	11 GMLV GLOSS OVOM Stevie Z
12 Bingo MCC WDIY HMFF Bingo	13 GLSEN RAA	14 LVGMC GLOSS PFLAG R	15 HAVEN	16 RAA GLOSS	17 INTEGRITY KS	18 WDIY GLOSS Game Night Stevie Z
19 MCC UUCLV	20 MCC RAA	21 GLOSS B&N BOOKCLUB LVGMC MCC	22 HAVEN	23 RAA GLOSS PFLAG P	24 KS Stevie Z	25 WDIY GLOSS Stevie Z
26 MCC WDIY Bingo HMFF UUCLV Super Bowl party	27 RAA	28 GLOSS LVGMC	29 HAVEN	30 RAA GLOSS	31 KS	

FEBRUARY 2003

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 WDIY BEARS GLORA GLOSS PFLAG M
2	3 RAA GLSEN	4 LVGMC GLOSS PFLAG A	5 HAVEN	6 RAA ACCO GLOSS	7	8 GLOSS MCC NFTMD
9 MCC	10 RAA	11 GLOSS LVGMC	12 NFTMD HAVEN	13 ACCO RAA GLOSS	14 KS	15 GLOSS
16 Bingo HMFF UUCLV MCC GLOSS	17 RAA	18 PFLAG R LVGMC GLOSS	19 HAVEN	20 PFLAG P RAA ACCO GLOSS	21 KS	22 GLOSS WDIY
23 Bingo HMFF UUCLV MCC GLOSS	24 RAA	25 LVGMC GLOSS	26 HAVEN	27	28 KS	GLOSS WDIY

Quakers-Lehigh Valley Friends Meeting-Route 512 1/2 mi. North of Rte 22 Bethlehem, PA. Worship at 9:30 am. (610)691-3411.
RAA- Rainbow AA meetings, Mon. & Thurs. Episcopal Church, 16th & Turner Atown.
Ren- Renaissance Transgendered Assoc., P.O.Box 157 Trexlertown 18087 - 610-814-0530/0531
Rainbow Space - Muhlenberg College Organization 610.821.3244
Reading P-FLAG- 610.488.7533or 670.8029
Safe Space- At Lehigh U. 610.758.3469
Saint John's Lutheran Church- A welcoming, gay affirming church, 32 S. 5th st. Allentown 610.435.1587
Softball-(Women's) call Diamonz, 610.865.1028
T.O. - Theatre Outlet-29 Nth 9th St, Allentown, 610-820-9270.
Unity-26 N. 3rd St. Emmaus, 767-4417
UUCLV - Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley, 424 Center Street, Bethlehem, 18018 610.866.7652.
VFP - Valley Free Press 610.432.5449, liztrish@aol.com
VYH - Valley Youth House for emotionally troubled GLBT youth 610.432.6481
WDIY - WDIY - 88.1 fm 93.9 fm Saturday 7:00 pm This Way Out, Assorted Women 7:30 pm. 610-694-8100.88.

SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS:

FACT BINGO@ DIAMONZ- SUNDAYS
MCC BLESSING OF RELATIONSHIPS PLANNING MTG - THIRD MONDAYS
GLBT YOUTH GROUP HAVEN - WEDNESDAYS
LV BEARS - 1ST SATURDAYS
GAY MEN-LV - 2ND SATURDAYS
GLOSS VOLLEYBALL -TUES
GLOSS TENNIS - SUNDAYS
GLOSS RACQUETBALL -TUES & SATS
MCC BOOK STUDY 2ND & 4TH TUES

DEC 5-22 - FUDDY MEERS @ T.O.
DEC 5-22 T.O. MARKETPLACE
DEC 19 - PFLAG POTTSVILLE
DEC 20 - STEVIE Z @ MOOSELOUNGE
DEC 20, 21, 22 - PA PLAYHOUSE - THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER
DEC 21 - MCC CHRISTMAS ANGELS
DEC 21 - GLOSS GAME NIGHT
DEC 21 - ACCO SOLSTICE CONCERT
DEC 24 - MCC OPEN HOUSE - CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
DECEMBER 25 - MCC CHRISTMAS SERVICE
DEC 28 - STEVIEZ @ BRICK TAVERN
DEC 31 - GLORA POTLUCK
JAN 4 - PFLAG MONROE
JAN 4 - STEVIEZ @ BRICK TAVERN
JAN 5 - MCC BIBLE STUDY
JAN 7 - PFLAG ALLENTOWN
JAN 10 - KINDRED SPIRITS
JAN 11 - OVOM FILM EVENT
JAN 11 - STEVIEZ 2 BRICK TAVERN
JAN 17 - INTEGRITY
JAN 17 - KINDRED SPIRITS
JAN 18 - STEVIEZ @ BRICK TAVERN
JAN 18 - GLOSS GAME NIGHT
JAN 21 - B&N BOOKCLUB
JAN 23 - PFLAG POTTSVILLE
JAN 24 - STEVIEZ @ MOOSELOUNGE
JAN 25 - STEVIEZ @ BRICK TAVERN
JAN 24 - KINDRED SPIRITS
JAN 26 - ANTI-SUPER BOWL PARTY
JAN 31- KINDRED SPIRITS
FEB 1 - GLORA GAME NIGHT
FEB 8 - MCC NFTMD @ SAND ISLAND
FEB 18 - B&N BOOKCLUB
MAR 18 - B&N BOOKCLUB

INFORMATION SUBJECT TO CHANGE CALL TO CONFIRM! TO POST INFO: 610-432-5449 EMAIL: LIZTRISH@AOL.COM

HATE CRIMES BILL

The Hate Crimes legislation passage was the result of a broad-based community effort from numerous organizations and individuals across the state and strong bipartisan support from the house leadership.

The community effort was lead by: the Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Alliance (PA-GALA), the largest gay and lesbian political organization in the state; the Statewide Pennsylvania Rights Coalition (SPARC), the state's largest network of individuals and organizations dedicated to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) legislative advocacy; the Center for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights, the state's only LGBT legal aid and public policy organization; the Pennsylvania Gender Rights Coalition, a statewide organization working for transgender rights; OUTFRONT a public education, legislative advocacy and political action organization, the Log Cabin Republicans of Pennsylvania, the Human Rights Campaign, PFLAG - Parents, Friends, Families, of Lesbians and Gays; as well as many LGBTA youth organizations and a wide variety of student groups across the Commonwealth.

A number of house members were instrumental in the bill's passage including several of the amendment's sponsors, including Republicans: Steve Nickol (York County), Pat Browne (Lehigh & Northampton Counties), Lita Cohen (Montgomery County) and Roy Cornell (Montgomery County) and Democrats: Steven Stetler (York County), Babette Josephs (Philadelphia) Mark Cohen (Philadelphia) , Dan Frankel (Pittsburgh), Jennifer Mann (Lehigh County), TJ Rooney (Lehigh & Northampton Counties) and Mike Veon (Beaver County).

Steve Black, political director of PA-GALA said, "Pennsylvania now has the most inclusive hate crimes law in the country - we applaud the legislature for taking this step to protect all Pennsylvanians from hate crimes." Steve Black has personally work on passing this bill for over 10 years. The bill won passage by a 118 to 79 vote after two hours of discussion. It passed the State Senate in June of 2001.

PA-GALA led the grassroots lobbying effort to pass the bill. PA-GALA generated, districted and mailed over 12,000 post cards supporting the bill to legislators over the last 2 years. PA-GALA mailed over 3,000 Legislative Alerts to GLBTA constituents in targeted state house districts, encouraging them to contact their representatives. PA-GALA districted and mailed over 2,000 letters and statements of support to Representatives. PA-GALA Political Director, Steve Black, Stacey Sobel, Steve Glassman and Mara Keisling spent countless days and hours in Harrisburg lobbying house members on the bill .

Please note that all Lehigh & Northampton County Representatives, except Paul Semmel, voted with our community on all votes. Including Representatives Pat Browne, Jennifer Mann, T.J. Rooney, Jane Baker, Steve Samelson, Robert Freeman, Rick Grucela, Craig Dally, and Julie Harhart.

CIVIL UNION ANNOUNCEMENTS

To have your Vermont Civil Union listed here, or to get more information on how to get a Vermont Civil Union, email VFP at:<liztrish@aol.com>.

MCC 'S NFTMD CELEBRATION PLANNED

MCCLV's National Freedom to Marry Day Celebration is coming up on February 8, 03. at the Ice House on Sand Island in Bethlehem. It will consist of both a blessing of relationships in which all couples of the GLBTA community are welcome to participate, and also a special same-sex marriage ceremony. Following the ceremony will be a reception and dance. The event is free, all are welcome. Couples who wish to participate in the same-sex marriage ceremony should e-mail the church at mcclehigh valley@yahoo.com or call 610-954-7775.

RANTS & RAVES BY STEPHEN T. LIBBY

In the heart of the holiday season I can only think of more things to be greatful for. (If I can't find something to bitch about soon we'll have to change the title to Raves & Raves)

1) For my friends and family. I feel lucky to have such supportive & loving people in my life. Welcome to the family Shawn.

2) For people like Mona Moody (Raymond Ortiz), who spend time perfecting their craft and then donate tirelessly of their energy and talent when good causes come knocking. Bless his & your beautiful souls.

3) For people like Steve Black (an OUT magazine Top 100 for 2002), City Council member Gail Hoover and Allentown Human Relations Commissioner Allyson Hamm. These people face 21st century blacklisting by being out everyday, all the time in order to secure equal rights for Lehigh Valley residents.

4) For places like the Theatre Outlet, that provide a venue not only for visiting NYC directors but also for local artists to showcase their talents. Brava!!

5) For the holiday spirit. The snow, holiday music and even tv specials transport me to a more innocent time. In this time of war, chaos and uncertainty, I wish you and yours a sprinkle of that holiday magic so that you too may feel that wonderment of innocence.

Peace & Love, Stephen

#1

Dear Readers: Local activists are preparing to begin a GLBT anti-discrimination ordinance effort in Bethlehem. If you have ever experienced employment, housing or public accommodation discrimination in Bethlehem based on your sexual orientation or gender identity, please call PA-GALA at 610-432-5449, or email <liztrish@aol.com>.

#2

Editor Liz Bradbury writes: I received an email about my statements on boycotting Domino's Pizza. It pointed out that anti-gay billionaire Tom Monaghan, who financed the unsuccessful effort to repeal Ypsilanti's gay rights ordinance, no longer owns Domino's. The email also suggested that to boycott Domino's wouldn't actually support GLBT rights, and could possibly harm GLBT Domino's employees.

You're right, email writer. It's wrong to boycott by simply not buying. A letter to the company to explain you want them to change their policy is essential. It's also true that anti-gay arch-conservative Tom Monaghan sold 93% of Domino's to another company in 1998. He currently only owns 7%.

Has Domino's changed to a pro-GLBT policy since Monaghan left the helm? Not according to the the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), which currently rates Domino's a 14 out of 100 points. HRC says Domino's has no anti-discrimination policies. HRC's 14 points means only that Domino's does not work actively against GLBT rights.

But if you choose to spend your money only in places that are actively pro-GLBT, pizza might be a problem. The corporation that owns Pizza Hut, "Yum! Inc." and those that own Little Caesar's and Papa John's are not rated by HRC at all.

So check local factors. The guy who sent me the email works at Domino's and feels they're pro-gay locally.

Also, there's Mom's Pizza across from 19th St.Theatre. The local franchise is gay owned, has a rainbow flag in the window and has frequently supported GLBT groups and organizations, including PA-GALA during the referendum effort.

Moral: Owners and policies change, so before you act, do the research. And If you do decide to boycott someplace, be sure to tell them you are doing so, and why.

CITIES PASS GENDER IDENTITY RIGHTS

This year, the cities of Philadelphia, New York, Chicago and Baltimore all added gender Identity to their anti-discrimination ordinances, all after Allentown did so.

PFLAG

The PFLAG LV (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) meets monthly at Allentown's First Presbyterian Church (Cedar Crest Blvd. and Tilghman St.) on first Tuesdays at 7:00 pm., in Room 115. Contact: pflag@fast.net or (610) 967-5219 for more information. There are also PFLAG meetings in Reading, Pottsville and Monroe County: See the calender on page 5 for meeting dates.

FOR LEGAL INFO ON 2ND PARENT ADOPTION

For information on 2nd parent adoption or if your lawyer has questions call The Center for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights in Philadelphia toll free at 1-866-LGBT-LAW.

Valley Free Press does not discriminate on the basises listed in the anti-discrimination statement on page 8 , and asks that organizations or individuals which request VFP to publish information about their events maintain a similar policy.

SCOTT SAYS

By Scott Laubner

SCOTT PLAYS COMEDY

I told Cora, my coworker, I'm performing in The Man Who Came To Dinner.

She said "Great, I loved Sidney Poitier in the movie." I thought I better sit Cora down and "straighten" her out.

The Man Who Came to Dinner premiered on Broadway in 1939. Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman, the playwrights, based some of the characters of this comedy on their friends in the theater world of the 1930s like; Noel Coward, Gertrude Lawrence and Harpo Marx. But you don't need to know about Broadway to get an evening of enjoyment at the Pennsylvania Playhouse. The show runs December 13,14,15, 20, 21,and 22. The box office number is 610-865-6665.

So my chipmunk readers don't miss this holiday show that has been entertaining audiences for decades.

Editors note: Dear Chipmunk readers (and the rest of you),

Last month I forgot to include the answers to Scott's- Which Diva Said What? article. Here they are. Sorry, Liz Bradbury

1. "Toto, I have a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore." (Judy Garland -- The Wizard of Oz -1939)
2. "Fasten your seat belts. It's going to be a bumpy night." -- (Bette Davis -- All About Eve -1950)
3. "All right, Mr. De Mille. I'm ready for my close-up." -- (Gloria Swanson - Sunset Boulevard -1950)
4. "Don't f**k with me, fellas! This ain't my first time at the rodeo!" -- (Faye Dunaway -- Mommie Dearest -1981)
5. "It's not easy having a good time. Even smiling makes my face ache." -- (Tim Curry -- The Rocky Horror Picture Show -1975)
6. "Too much of a good thing can be wonderful." -- (Mae West -- I'm No Angel -1933)
7. "It looks like a flamingo threw up in here! "(Bette Midler-- Beaches - 1988)
8. "Well, if I can be of any help at all, you are in worse trouble than I thought." -- (Lily Tomlin -- All of Me -1984)
9. "If I had to live my life again, I'd make the same mistakes, only sooner." -- (Tallulah Bankhead)
10. "Of course life is hard. After all, it kills you."-- (Katharine Hepburn)
11. "When I want your opinion, I'll give it to you." -- (Miss Piggy)

CRACKER BARREL FINALLY ENDS DISCRIMINATION

The parent company of Cracker Barrel restaurants, has voted unanimously to add sexual orientation to the company's non-discrimination policy.

Cracker Barrel drew national attention in 1991 when it instituted a company policy that called for terminating employees "whose sexual preferences fail to demonstrate normal heterosexual values which have been the foundation of families in our society." The company's discrimination - which was legal in the states where it occurred and remains legal under federal law - touched off a wave protests and boycotts at Cracker Barrel restaurants.

LOCAL AGENCY GIVES D.P. BENEFITS

The Board of Valley Youth House has decided to give employees domestic partner benefits for same-sex partners.

LOCAL ACTIVIST STARTS BUSINESS

Business owner Lee Klein has a decorator's sense of placement and a talent for organization. **By Klein Organizational Services** helps clients deal with working and livings spaces that are filled with unanswered mail, expiring offers and misplaced receipts or have burgeoning closets and drawers.

Need to regain control over your living space? Need to get organized? Call By Klein Organizational Services, 610-253-5454 ext.2, for a confidential consultation.

A VIEW FROM A DYKE

PA-GALA

By Liz Bradbury

2002 in Review:

January: Gail Hoover sworn in as Allentown City Council member-- becomes the highest ranked openly GLBT elected official in the state.

February: Allyson Hamm is appointed to the Allentown Human Relations Commission.

March: Gail Hoover Introduces Amendment of sexual orientation and gender identity as separate classes to the Allentown Anti-discrimination Ordinance. Council members Guridy, Velasquez, Burke and Howells **cosponsor. PA-GALA hosts Laramie Project** fund raiser at the Theater Outlet raising over $2000. PA-GALA **donates $1000 to Pride** LV.

April: Hundreds of pro-rights citizens attend the Allentown City Council meetings. **The Bill passes and the Mayor signs it into law. Steve Black and Allyson Hamm collect enough signatures** to get on the ballot for State Democratic Committee. Anti-gay group begins **petition effort to overturn** Allentown's Anti-discrimination Ordinance by referendum. **PA-GALA protests Rep. Pat Toomey** for allowing anti-gay petition in Senior Fest booth. After pressure from constituents, Toomey denounces petitioner and referendum effort. **Ricardo Montero publishes gay bashing** statements of his own and by anti-gay group in **El Torero** newspaper.

May: A dedicated crew of 12 organizers commit to helping PA-GALA fight the referendum petition. **Hundreds volunteer.** PA-GALA Rep. Liz Bradbury successfully encourages all elected officials who represent Allentown (except Hershman and Bausch) to support the current law in writing. **PA-GALA fights the referendum effort on Primary Day with 70 volunteers. PA-GALA mails candidate guides to thousands of GLBT voters. Attorney Dan Anders works with Liz Bradbury to create a legal declaration** that allows people to remove their petition signatures, ultimately setting a state precedent and creating a national model. PA-GALA representatives **Liz Bradbury and Trish Sullivan** meet with Allentown Police **Chief Kuhn, who agrees that there will be no more anti-gay stings in the city**. Leaders of the GLBT community and the Latino Community meet with Morning Call to **demand termination of Morning Call circulation of El Torero. Allyson Hamm is elected** to the State Democratic committee in Lehigh County, **receives highest number of votes. Steve Black and Liz Bradbury appear in Advocate** article that touts PA-GALA's local efforts as, "Better Living Here in Allentown."

June: Anti-Gay petitioners give false information to get **Kate Fridirici** to sign the petition. Kate removes her name from petition and **becomes PA-GALA's College Intern, helping Steve Black lobby for the Hate Crimes Bill in Harrisburg. Morning Call cancels circulation of El Torero newspaper.** Anti-gay group files signed petitions with city, after non-residents are weeded out, there are still 50 more signatures than needed. But **City accepts over 600 signature removal declarations.**

July: Anti-gay group is unable to get enough additional signatures. Over 200 more people remove their names. Allentown City Council refuses anti-gay group's request to ignore 835 signature removal declarations. Anti-gay group, fearing legal action, decides against court challenge. **Petition effort ends unsuccessfully.**

August: PA Supreme Court overturns lower court ruling, making second parent adoption again legal in PA.

September: Baptist minister makes **anti-gay remark at September 11** service. **Metropolitan Community Church responds strongly**, which ultimately generates pro-GLBT statements from the **Bethlehem Council of Churches** and the Bethlehem Presbyterian Church. Fred Phelps' anti-gay hate group threatens to demonstrate. Valley Free Press editors Liz Bradbury and Trish Sullivan create anti-Phelps pledge drive that generates $2000 for MCC.

October: N.E. PA **Hispanic Gay and Lesbian Alliance gives $1000 donations** to both PA-GALA and FACT. PA-GALA mails thousands of general election candidate guides to GLBT voters.

November: Rendell wins. Hate Crimes Bill passes State House. Steve Black named one of OUT magazine's Out 100 (Liz Bradbury also mentioned). Nationally, all election challenges to pro-gay rights laws fail, including ones that PA-GALA members helped to fight, in Ypsilanti MI, Dade County FLA and Oregon.

December: Governor signs Hate Crimes Bill into law. Phelps family actually shows up, which causes college students to organize and rally for pro-tolerance and diversity.

TRISH'S COLUMN

By Patricia Sullivan

WHERE'S THE XMAS CITY DURING ALL THIS?

"Silence is acceptance," said Lehigh University student Aaron Bartalion (from The Express Times, December 7, 2002.), explaining why he choose not to ignore the Westboro Baptist pickets at Lehigh University. Students from Lehigh, Moravian, Cedar Crest and Muhlenberg colleges were at the many demonstrations and spoke out without hesitation in support of diversity.

These recent events started with the anti-gay statement by local Baptist Minister Marshal Griffin months ago on September 11. Most disturbing to me is the silence from the Bethlehem City officials. Mayor Don Cunningham, and the members of Bethlehem City Council have not publicly expressed support for diversity, including sexual orientation and gender identity, nor have they condemned the recent anti-gay hate activity.

It's not too hard to condemn a group of who pickets mainstream churches with signs that say, "God Hates America", "God Sent the Sniper," and "God Hates Fags." It's not very radical to say, "We don't believe the 9-11 terrorist attacks happened because parishioners at our local churches didn't speak out against gay men and lesbians," or more simply, "Bethlehem, the Christmas City, supports diversity including sexual orientation and gender identity and condemns hate activity of any kind." But Bethlehem Officials just couldn't bring themselves to do that.

Ilse Stoll the organizer of the speak-out at the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley, called Bethlehem City Hall five times asking for a statement. Finally, Bethlehem City Council President James Gregory, issued a statement that was obtuse and off topic. It was mostly about the history of Bethlehem and Christmas lights.

Yes, Christmas lights. It seems that in (actual quote) "the Christmas City, numerous lights along with ethnic Christmas tree displays highlight the community and respect for the many cultures that have gathered here." Ilse read the statement because no Bethlehem Official bothered to participate in any of the speak outs.

I am proud that Allentown City government officials spoke out against hate and in support of diversity, including sexual orientation and gender identity, at both speak outs in Bethlehem.

The City of Bethlehem has no Anti-discrimination Ordinance. Since there is no Federal or State protection for housing, employment and public accommodation that includes sexual orientation and gender identity, GLBT people can be and are discriminated against legally in Bethlehem.

Mr. Gregory ended his statement by saying, "I would hope that our community can serve as an outward example of the accomplishments that can be realized when we accept our differences and shine the light on our individual and civic goals."

I would hope so too! It's time for Bethlehem to serve as an outward example by implementing an Anti-discrimination Ordinance that protects the housing, employment and public accommodation rights of its gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender citizens.

POP QUIZ

Note: Last month's quiz left out the answer to #9 (about Lorena Hickok). It was: Eleanor Roosevelt.

1. About how many same-sex couples now have VT Civil Unions? A.1000 B. 3000 C. 5000 D. 7000

2. What is the name of Steve Black's bright yellow new truck? A. Sponge Bob B. Mrs. Butterworth C. Mr. Sunshine D. Sun Dog

3. Which of these people actually appeared in "Wong Foo- Thanks For Everything, Julie Newmar."
A. Julie Newmar B. Ru Paul
C. Stockard Channing D. Robin Williams

4. In 'Wong Foo,' Vita is from: A. Bryn Mawr B. Bala Cynwyd C. Haverford. D. Manayunk

5. In 'Wong Foo' the NY Chinese restaurant with the drag queen wait staff is probably fashioned after the real NY Chinese restaurant: A. Foo's B. Pearl's C. Lucky Cheng's D. Pink China Palace

6. Run off winner Mary Landrieu (D) is the first woman Senator elected in:A.WY B.SC C.LA D.TX

7. Which of these cue card readers earned a place in Out magazine's Hall of Shame for negative remarks about Rosie? A. Pat Sajak B. Vanna White C. Alex Tribec D. Bob Barker

8. In what song do we, "don our gay apparel?"
A. We 3 Kings B. Deck the Halls
C. Winter Wonderland D. Sliver Bells

9. Which of these is a recent gay themed film?
A. The Adventures of Felix B. Felix and Oscar
C. Felix Navidad D. Fortunately Felix

10. The company that originally produced Fiesta ware was: A. Harlequin Inc. B. Clarice Clyff Design C. Homer Laughlin Co. D. Roseville Co.

1.C 2.B 3.All 4.B 5.C 6.C 7.A 8.B 9.A 10.C

TO GET A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE VALLEY FREE PRESS JOIN PA-GALA BY SENDING $20 TO: PA-GALA, P.O. BOX 20825 LEHIGH VALLEY, PA 18002

Valley Free Press is produced by RubyZebu Productions which owns the copyright thereto. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the express permission of the editors. Editors: Elizabeth Bradbury, Patricia Sullivan; Columnists: Elizabeth Bradbury, Patricia Sullivan, Denise McKelvey, Ruby Zebu, Carolyn Lewis, Stephen Libby, Scott Laubner and others

We believe it would improve the quality of life in the Lehigh Valley if all people were equally protected from unfair discrimination based upon actual orperceived race,color, religion ,national origin,ancestry or place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, family status, age, disability, or use of a guide animal, in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodation.

PA-GALA

Valley Free Press

Allentown Human Relations Commission

Safe-Space of Lehigh University

PFLAG Lehigh Valley

ACCO - A Chorus Celebrating Women

GLORA

Pride of the LV

LV Gay Men's Chorus

NCC GLBT Student Union

The Lehigh Valley Labor Party

EQUAL! at Agere

Metropolitan Community Church LV

OutThere - Cedar Crest

9th Street Shelter Allentown

LV Community Action Committee

GLEE at Air Products

FACT

AIDS Outreach

The Unitarian Universalist Church LV

GLOSS

LEPOCO

GLISN of Dun & Bradstreet

AIDS Services Center

Theatre Outlet

Integrity - Bethlehem

The Lehigh Valley Religous Society of Friends (Quakers)

Civic Theater 19th Street Theatre

The Latin Alliance

The Enigma Players

New Covenant Family Ministries

Properties of Merit

Allentown City Democratic Committee

Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem

Puerto Rican Cultural Alliance

To add your organization to this list, call 610-432-5449 or email VFP (liztrish@aol.com).

QUOTE #1

"Even today I speak in states where homosexuality is still illegal. Oh. I'm in one of them now. I forgot where I was. Imagine that."

-- Olympic champion diver Greg Louganis speaking at the University of Utah, Oct. 11.

QUOTE #2

"22 years ago at a Mississippi rally for Ronald Reagan, Congressman Trent Lott said,"When Strom Thurmond ran for President, we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had followed our lead, we wouldn't have had all these problems over the years." In 1992, Lott accepted an award from the Council of Conservative Citizens, the descendant of the White Citizens Councils of the 1950s, by saying: "The people in this room stand for the right priciples and the right philosophy..."

--Syndicated Columnist Richard Reeves on Trent Lott's long time record of public racism.

QUOTE #3

"I think that mask and the powder blue outfit are fantastic. I can certainly see why the Indian follows him around,"

Reprised and now openly gay Marvel Comic Book character, "The Rawhide Kid," on the Lone Ranger

QUOTE #4

"The Allentown Human Relations Commission opposes the efforts of any organization that encourages hatred and seeks to disrupt the community. The Commission rejects the efforts of groups like the Westboro Baptist Church..."

- Allentown Human Relations Commission Statement RE: Hate

QUOTE #5

"I would like to continue referring students from BCCC to DeSales for transfer and continue to suggest that my colleagues do the same. Will you let me know specifically what DeSales' plan is to end discrimination against its same-sex DP couples?"

-- James M. Fillman, College Instructor & DeSales graduate -- In a letter to DeSales University on their lack of benefits to same-sex partners of employees.

The editorial columns and political cartoon that appear in Valley Free Press express the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or attitude of this publication. VFP makes no indication of the sexual orientation of persons, organizations, or businesses mentioned in any issue.